

The adventures of Bobby Lounge; or, the unfortunate levee haunter. Related by himself, as a real fact. The second edition.

Bobby Lounge





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Lounge, Bobby

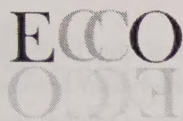
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Bobby Lounge is a pseudonym. A novel.

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The Coxenors

ACT II

THE
ADVENTURES
OF
BOBBY LOUNGE;

OR, THE
Unfortunate LEVEE HAUNTER.

RELATED BY HIMSELF,

AS A REAL FACT.

THE SECOND EDITION.

"NEMO MORTALIS OMNIBUS HORIS CAPIT."

VIRGIL.

L O N D O N
PRINTED AND SOLD BY W. KEMMISH, BOROUGH,
ALSO, SOLD BY J. PARSONS PATERNOS OR-ROW,
AND ALL THE BOOKSELLERS.

INTRODUCTION.

TH E following sheets are published merely as a caution to men of genius from dangleing at a minister's levee, and idling that time, which might be employed in some more worthy occupation, to be honoured with a smile, a squeeze of the hand, and a large promise. A LEVEE HAUNTER, (for so they are named) in the opinion of the judicious part of mankind, is contemptible beyond every thing; nay, a Levee Haunter will even stoop to implore protection, and receive

IV INTRODUCTION.

a favour from the hand he hates. For why? Because he is a GREAT MAN.—The reader is therefore requested to peruse these series of Adventures, with that attention which is due to a relation of facts.

THE
ADVENTURES
OF
BOBBY LOUNGE, &c.

CHAPTER I.

MY BIRTH AND EDUCATION—CHARACTER OF MY
FATHER—HIS MANNER OF LIVING—HIS DEATH
—EULOGIUM ON FRIENDSHIP.

NOT to give a Herald-office account of my ancestors—my father was the younger son of a good family; and was possessed of a small living at Shrewsbury;—his education was above his fortune; and his generosity above his education: poor as he was, he had his flatterers poorer than himself: for every dinner he gave them, they returned him an equiva-

lent in praise, and this was all he wanted : the same ambition that actuates a monarch at the head of his army, influenced my father at the head of his table . he repeated the story of the Scholars and the one Pair of Breeches : his flatterers laughed at that : but the story of St. David in the Sedan Chair, and the following Song were sure to set the table in a roar :——

S O N G.

TUNE—CONTENTED I AM.

I.

WHEN a bumper's before me how happy am I,
No care ever enters my breast ;
I count not the moments, but let them all fly,
For the present I know are the best.

II.

Let the dealers in morals sententiously prate,
And tell me that life's but a span ;
Like others I know I am subject to fate,
So of life I'll make all that I can.

III.

If Fortune should frown, I will never repine,
The jade still is fickle I know ;
Give me a good friend, and a bumper of wine,
Those are blessings the chiefest below.

IV.

No sect I despise, yet to none I am bound,
For still I am easy and free ;
With a heart-cheering song let the ev'ning be crown'd,
So mirth, and good liquor for me.

V.

The miser may hoard, and the tradesman may toil,
Why let them pursue their own way ;
If I've but the comforts of life I can smile,
And meagre fac'd care keep away.

VI.

Then give me my bumper, and true-hearted friend,
My time shall still merrily pass ;
I will laugh, I will tittle unto my life's end,
Nor look at the sand in the glass.

Thus his pleasure was increased in proportion to the pleasure he gave: he loved all the world, and fancied all the world loved him.—As his fortune was very small, he lived up to the extent of it, he had no intention of leaving me, his son, money : no, that was dross : he was resolved I should have learning : for learning, he used to observe, was better than silver or gold : for that purpose he undertook to instruct me himself, and therefore used his utmost endeavours to form my morals, so as to improve my understanding : in this he was occasionally assisted by the
parish

parish clerk, *David Dismal*.—Poor *David*! often have I struggled to myself from frequent fits of laughter, which his formal physiognomy occasioned:—he was indeed the very essence of antiquity:—his methodical behaviour very ill suited my turn of mind: I was fond of dress and company, and was careless in the extreme:—notwithstanding which, *David* would tell my father, if I took care, I should be a great man one time or other, for I had a thorough knowledge of things:—In short he learned me the following rules; (which, alas! did not at all suit the age we live in)—That universal benevolence cemented Society.—To consider all the wants of mankind as my own.—To regard the human face Divine with esteem.—Indeed at last (tho' I still retained my other failings) he wound me up to a mere machine of pity, and made me incapable of withstanding either real, or fictitious distress.—In a word, I was perfectly instructed in the art of giving away thousands, before I was taught the more necessary qualification of getting a farthing.

I cannot avoid imagining, that thus refined by his lessons, out of all my suspicion, and divested of all the little cunning nature

ture had given me, I resembled, upon my first entrance into the busy and insidious world, one of those gladiators who were exposed without arms in the amphitheatre at Rome.

My father, however, who had only seen the world on one side, seemed to triumph in my superior discernment; though at this time my whole stock of wisdom consisted in being able to discourse on subjects that once were useful, because they were then topics of the busy world. When I had reached the age of eighteen, my father died, and left me—his BLESSING.

Thus shoved from shore, without ill-nature to protect, or cunning to guide, or proper stores to subsist me, in so dangerous a voyage, I was obliged to embark into the wide world; but, in order to settle in life, my friends advised me, (for they always advise, when they begin to despise us) they advised me, I say, to go into orders! To be obliged to wear my hair curled round, when I liked it queued, or a black coat, when I chose scarlet, I thought was a restraint upon my liberty; besides, I had no turn for such solemnity, so I absolutely rejected the proposal.

A priest

A priest in England, in these modern times, is not the same mortified creature with a Bonze in China : with us, not he that fasts best, but eats best, is reckoned the best liver. Yet I rejected a life of ease, luxury, and indolence, from no other consideration, but change of dress ; so that my friends were now satisfied I was undone.

Yet, still, I had friends, numerous friends ! and to them I was resolved to apply.—Oh ! friendship ! thou fond foother of the human breast ! to thee we fly in every calamity—to thee the wretched seek for succour !—and the care-tired son of misery relies !—from thy kind assistance the unfortunate always hope for relief, and may be sure of—*Disappointment*, (at least so with the friends of this age.)

C H A P. II.

A TRIAL OF FRIENDSHIP—VISIT MR. DRYBONES,
THE ATTORNEY—MY RECEPTION—GO TO MR.
TRIM—LEAVE HIM IN A RAGE.

AS I was resolved to make a trial of my pretended friends, I, on the following day, put my design into execution: the first I visited was Mr. *Drybones*, the attorney, to whom my father had often lent sums of money, when first he set up in his profession: I therefore thought myself secure of success. As I went along, “if I obtain the loan of 200*l.* of my friend, I will instantly set off for London, and purchase some place under government, by the profits of which I shall soon be enabled to repay my friend’s generosity.” Filled with these reflections, I reached his house; and having knocked at the door and obtained admittance, I found him picking his teeth in an easy chair. (Now he had heard nothing of my misfortune, that is, my father not leaving me any income.) Compliments having passed on both sides, I, without ceremony, informed him of my situation, concluding with telling him, that now was
the

the time to shew his friendship, for I wanted to borrow two hundred pounds of him.— And pray, Sir, (replied he) do you want all this money? Indeed I never wanted it more, (cried I.) I am sorry for that, (returns *D ybones*) with all my heart—for they who want money when they come to borrow, will want money when they come to pay. So, John, shew Mr. Lounge out. Good afternoon, Sir!—Filled with shame at this mortifying treatment, I waited not for John's attendance, but sallied down stairs, exclaiming against the ingratitude of one who had been so much obliged to my father.

I next resolved to solicit Mr. *Trim*, the stock-broker. If I have failed (said I to myself) with one who professed friendship for me, that may not always be the case. On obtaining admission to him, I made the same request.—Two hundred pounds! aye, certainly, I will lend you that sum immediately!—I was almost overcome with joy at the answer I received; and, pulling out an empty purse, was preparing to receive the glittering store, when my friend, putting on a long face, asked me what security I could give. Security! (exclaimed I, rather astonished at the change

change in his behaviour), I would wish to make a matter of friendship of it.—“A matter of friendship,” re-echoed he!—“pray, sir, what has friendship to do with two hundred pounds? A pretty fellow! Friendship! Good Mr. Friendly, how long is it since you became so good natured as to ask two hundred pounds upon friendship?” Bursting with rage, I had not patience to listen to the rest of his exordiums, but overturning a well-filled table, I rushed out of the house, and hastened home, vowing to retaliate their ill behaviour, if ever it came in my power.

C H A P. III.

WAIT ON PARSON BULLFACE—URGE MY DISTRESS,
HIS ANSWER — AM DISAPPOINTED—MEET WITH
UNEXPECTED RELIEF—AND BY WHOM.

I Had been at home about half an hour, reflecting on my unhappy situation, when a thought struck me—it was this : Parson *Bullface*, who was rector of a village within two miles of my habitation, I recollected had often taken great notice of me, when he used to visit my father : to him, as the last, I resolved to apply ; therefore, after refreshing myself, I immediately set out to his vicarage ; and, in less than an hour reached it.—he behaved very politely, desiring me to seat myself, and observing, this visit was friendly ;—but, no sooner had I acquainted him with my situation, than his tone changed : he told me I had been, he feared, lavish of the little my father had left me, and that I was always indolent and careless : he could not think of any such thing ; at the same time urging what a scandal it would be to his cloth should he patronize extravagance. At this instant the smell of a tythe pig, -smoking hot, passing through the room, saluted the parson's nostrils. So
without

without ceremony he bid me a good afternoon, and waddled out of the room, leaving me overwhelmed with confusion at my disappointment.

Going down stairs, who should I meet in the passage, but my methodical tutor *David Dismal*; the poor fellow shook me by the hand, and seemed heartily glad to see me, adding, if I would inform him where I resided, he would call on me after prayers. Having told me that since my father's death he had been engaged as clerk to Bullface : saying this, he stalked up stairs, and I returned home.

Accordingly, at the time appointed, *Dismal* came, and being seated, without any previous introduction, began as follows :—" Look'e, Master *Lounge*, I have heard of your situation, and am sorry that the son of a worthy man should be involved in distress : as for the brute my master, (for I heard the whole account at dinner,) treat him with the contempt he deserves : I have here twenty pounds, which I saved in my place ; if you think it worthy your acceptance, Heaven bless you with it : as for me, I shan't want it."

Struck with the gratitude of one from whom I so little expected it, I was for some time unable to answer: he observing it, said, "Sir, I insist on your taking it, and make yourself easy: I hope things will go better: I am now going to serve you farther: this afternoon I spoke to the lord of our manor, 'Squire Worthy, who has promised to give you a recommendation to *Lo d Squeeze*, the minister: you shall have it in the morning." So saying, he withdrew, leaving me overwhelmed with surprise at this unexpected generosity.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

RECEIVE MY LETTER—TAKE LEAVE OF DISMAL—
 SET OFF FOR LONDON—DROLL ADVENTURE AT
 AN INN—CHARACTER OF MR. QUEERUM—DITTO
 OF CAPTAIN BLUSTER AND OF SAMMY SMIRK—
 REACH LONDON

IN the morning, Dismal, according to promise, arrived, with the letter directed for *Lord Squeeze*, in Downing-street: he advised me to set off immediately for London, adding, emphatically, “ah, Bob, I shall live to see you a great man” I pressed the honest old clerk’s hand, and replied, “if ever I am, David, I shall not be destitute of gratitude to retaliate your generosity.” “No, my dear young master,” said David, “I dare be sworn thou wilt not; but Heavens bless thee in whatever portion of life it pleaseth to place thee—thou shalt not want my prayers.”

Dismal staid with me the whole day, and next morning I set off in the stage for London—taking with me my all,—David promising to dispose of my goods, and re-

put me the money when I reached London,—which consisted of two suits of cloaths, nine shirts, eight pair of stockings, two hats, handkerchiefs, &c. and twenty pounds in my pocket ; so that in my own imagination, I already became a great man.

We that evening put up at an inn on the road, where I met with the following diabolical adventure—There were two ostlers at the above place, who were both in love with one female, namely, *Bridget*, the cook maid. One swore he would be intitled to the privilege of the kitchen and a sop in the pan into the bargain. *John*, (for that was his name) seemed to be the favourite of *Bridget*, and *James* her aversion : this nettled the latter, and he was resolved to be revenged : he heard *Bridget* whisper to *John*, that her door should stand open in the night. Of this *James* was determined to avail himself, and he before-hand with the other, who had that night taken large portions of the tankard. As liquor generally makes people amorous, so it was with the subject *James* had to work upon. *John* now being half seas over, *James* altered his first design, of being before-hand with him, but determined

mined to fill them with terror, ere they had time to consummate their loves :—and now the god of sleep had exerted his influence over all the house, saving *Bridget* and *John*—she impatiently waiting for her swain—he busy in groping out her chamber—the lazy landlord no longer heard the keen and quick reproaches of his wife—the subtle turnspit now no longer dreaded the brawny hand of *Bridget*, but safely lay by the ash grate side, with the trusty house dog, and keen scented hound : and now *John*, observed by *James*, was seen to enter *Bridget*'s chamber !

“ Oh, curse of violent passions ! what indiscretions do ye betray in us ! and you, ye unfortunate pair ! were ye not the cause of each alarm, for meeting at this silent hour of night, and not having cautiously fastened your door ? ”

The village clock had now struck twelve, when *James*, with the friendly aid of the jack chain and a sheet off his bed, like a ghost strides towards his design : he bore in his hand a plate, in which was laid a composition of spirits of wine and salt, which being set on fire, and held near the middle, with the addition of a
little

little whiting rubbed over his face, occasioned him to make a very horrid appearance : being thus prepared, he stalks into *Bridget's* chamber, where the amorous *John* was just imbibing the unctuous fragrance from his *dulcinea's* lips. *James*, as he entered the room, brought up a deep groan from the bottom of his thorax, and, drawing near the bed, stood over them in a threatening attitude, so that when they turned their eyes, they beheld a dreadful apparition ready to devour them ! — *Bridget* fainted away—not with love, gentle reader ! but with fear : and *John*, with a face which testified that he expected every moment he should be carried through the air, rose upon his knees, and, in a tone of incredible distress, exclaimed,—“ O ! good dear Mr. Devil, if you will but forgive me this once, I will never more cheat a traveler's horse of his corn—I know I've been a wicked mortal—but I—I—I—” Here unable to proceed through fear, he sunk senseless on the bed. This gave *James* an opportunity to drag him into the hay-loft; and, after this returned to his chamber : it happened that I lay next to him, and hearing a noise, jumped out of bed : on opening his door, I perceived him pulling off

off his disguise ; which he observing, related the whole affair ; adding, “ if you don’t blab, master, you’ll see some fun.”

By the time Mr. ghost had vanished, *Bridget* discovered herself, and began to alarm the family, with her cries, with all the vociferation imaginable. *James*, in his way, -had let fall some of the spirits, which now burnt in a blue flame : the first who entered *Bridget’s* chamber was Mr. *Queerum*, a London excise officer, who, to do him justice, was ugly beyond expression : he seeing the blue flame burning, called out “ Fire ! fire ! fire ! ” upon which running to the door opposite, he received the contents of an earthen vessel all over him ! the whole being performed by the light *James* had scattered about the room.—*Queerum* still continued bawling out as before, with the addition of thieves ! thieves ! when another door opened, and the unfortunate exciseman received a blow from an ugly left hand, which brought him to the ground.

The light which *James* scattered was now extinguished, and it was total darkness, when I hearing the strange bustle in the passage, ventured out of my room,
with

with a light : and oh, what a scene there had met my eyes ! Had the inimitable Hogarth, or Rowlandson been present, they might have had capital sketches from nature—the exciseman just rising from the floor, with his eyes cast upwards, shewed a face not very agreeable to the view ;—within the door appeared the hero, who had leveled *Queenum* to the ground—his head encircled with something that resembled a coronet—but on a nearer view, was perceived to be that part of the male attire called by the name of breeches : in one hand he brandished a bed-post, in the other a pistol : the ghost had so terrified him, he was in a temporary state of madness—nor was his companion, a male milliner, much behind him in his way—he appeared with a pair of stays over his shirt, and a smelling-bottle in his hand, desiring the Captain [for such I found he was] not to be too boisterous, or he would faint, 'pon honour ! The hostess had in her confusion, placed on her head her husband's full-bottomed wig, and what added most to the grotesque appearance, was its being placed the wrong side before ! this, with the addition of a red petticoat across her shoulders, completed her dress ;—nor was the host equipped in a less extraordinary

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nary manner ; he, like the rest, had put on the first thing he could find, which happened to be a large black cloak of his wife's, which, with a high-crowned hat and feathers, that he had placed over his night-cap, completed his habiliments :—the other travellers, male and female, appeared severally in their shirts and shifts, all with the strongest expressions of fear and surprize portrayed in their countenances.

Such was the situation of the people and affairs when I brought the light. I now began to enquire into the cause of the disturbance, [though I well knew it before] and being informed by *Bridget*, of what had appeared, she concluding, with telling me, that the Devil flew away with *John* through her room !

I could not help smiling at her invention. I then proposed searching for *John*, and knowing well enough where he was, we soon found him upon a truss of hay, almost melted to a jelly with fear, and, by the effluvia which saluted our nostrils, we were convinced he was more in need of roast beef and plum pudding, than of purging nostrums ! Being supported in a
reclining

reclining attitude, and having recovered a little, he began his story by telling us, the Devil had conveyed him from his bed, and left him where he then was ;—in this he was corroborated by *Bridget*, who affirmed, it vanished in a flash of fire ! She likewise added to the ghost a pair of horns and a long tail.

I pretended to laugh them out of their fear, by supposing that *John* might have walked there in his sleep ; but not all the eloquence of a Fox or a Sheridan could persuade Captain *Bluster*, or the rest of the company out of their opinion, or induce them to retire to their respective apartments, one and all declaring it their intention to pass the remainder of the night in the kitchen, and refresh themselves with something comfortable. I finding that was their fixed resolution, retired to my chamber, where I found *James*, waiting the period of this adventure, and almost convulsed with laughter.

Next morning I arose, and after refreshing myself, took my former place in the stage. We had not drove far, when I recollected the faces of *Queerum*, Capt. *Bluster*, and the other effeminate gentleman
who

who had made no inconsiderable part of the foregoing faice.

I soon found Captain *Bluster*, was one of those who, under the title of Captain, concealed every vice I am capable of mentioning : he had been at Monmouth, to visit an aunt, and was on his return to London.

Queerum was an exciseman, and was returning from a fruitless enterprize.

As to the last, his name, I found, was *Sammy Smirk*, a vender of small wares, in Broad-street : in a word, he was one of those reptiles called a Man Milliner.—

“ 'Pon my soul,” says *Sammy*, “ I feel myself very much disordered from the last night's accident—sha'n't recover myself these three weeks.”—“ Zounds !” says the *Captain*, “ what a pidgeon-livered fellow you must be—oh, if he had come near me——.” “ Not so fast, Captain,” echoed the other, “ if you was a man of courage, you would advance to subdue an enemy ; but, *Captain*, I am a witness, that you then had other feelings, and that all

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your five senses were fully engaged, for your knees rattled together like marrow-bones, and you shook from top to toe with fear, as much as I did."—"Fire and fury!" returned the Captain, "you little insect, do you dare to tax me with cowardice? Sdeath! d—n—t—n! you rascal, I'll carbonade you—but, I think, you're hardly worth my revenge, you retailer of bobbins."—"Hem!" says the fop, "you brute, do you dare to reflect on my profession?"—"Dare," replied the other, "another word, and I'll—" Here I stopped him, desiring him to recollect the object of his wrath, and the great power of the law. "You are right, friend," returns *Bluster*, "and I am obliged to you for your advice." Thus I settled peace once more; and nothing further worthy remark happened till my safe arrival at the Saracen's-head, Snow-hill;—where *Bluster* and I, with three or four others, spent the evening, in agreeable converse, on various subjects, till my friend *Bluster* became so elevated by the juice of the vine, that he could not digest any arguments that did not implicitly tally with his own ideas, however ridiculous.—In the course of conversation, one of the guests, a shrewd, intelligent, and lively

companion, took occasion to remark on the vast number of loose idle fellows, on the army half-pay, as a heavy useless burden on the community, devouring the bread of infants, and squandering away the produce of the labourer's toil in wantonness and other vices, many of whom strutted about in boots with cockades, who did not know a caitouch-box from a band-box. At these words *Bluster* lost the command of his temper, and, bursting into a rage, drew his rusty sword, which never appeared on the plains of Minden, and would have runned him through, had not the gentleman prudently checked his intention, by asking pardon, and declaring he did not know him to be one of that description; yet, as the cap fitted him, hoped he would wave the matter till a proper opportunity, and not discompose the rest of the good company.

“Why, d—n you, you looby,” says *Bluster*, “I have been in the army these forty years, and how dare you to lessen my character, and say I don't know a catridge box from a band box? D—n me, if you say another word upon the subject, I'll spit you, d—n me.” Here we observed the approach of a very serious

scene, which called loudly for an interference of the company ; on my part, I took occasion to remind him of the impropriety of his conduct on the road—how much such conduct had sullied the character of a gentleman, exalted by the ornament of his Majesty's communion—that his behaviour had thrown a doubt on his character, by his not observing decency in the company he was in, and if he did not correct his conduct, either he or I should quit the room, for I was determined to spend an agreeable hour with the company, undisturbed by such ungentle altercation. This had the desired effect ; and the remainder of the evening was spent with great good humour, without the Captain speaking another word concerning the difference between a cat-touch and a band-box.

C H A P. V.

ATTEND LORD SQUEEZE'S LEVEE—MY RECEPTION,
—AM PROMISED A PLACE—MY JOY ON THE OC-
CASION—TAKE GENTEEL LODGINGS—AN ADVEN-
TURE AT THE PLAY-HOUSE.

IN the morning, after having put on a clean ruffled shirt, a scarlet coat, silk stockings, a fashionable sword, &c. &c. I proceeded to Lord *Squeeze*: though several times directed out of my way, I at length arrived at his magnificent mansion; and, after knocking several times at the door, a surly ill-looking fellow, opened it, who in a hoarse voice, demanded what I wanted. I, in a submissive manner, asked for my Lord. “He is not to be spoke to,” answers the surly cerberus. I requested to know when I could see him. “Don’t know,” says the fellow, and instantly shut the door in my face; and, had I not been tolerably dexterous, he would have fastened in the skirts of my best coat, and broke my elegant sword.

A pretty reception this, thought I to myself. If this is the *London* genteelty, I

shall begin to have but a very mean opinion of my situation ; so I walked away, bewildered in thought and anxiety, till I arrived in St. James's Park, where I perambulated till the clock struck one, when a new thought struck me, and I instantly sallied back to Downing-street, and after palming the porter two shillings, I readily obtained admittance to my Lord, who was under the hands of his friseur. I made him my obedience, and presented the letter, which he had no sooner read, than he arose, and squeezing me by the hand, told me he would take great care not to forget me. I made him my acknowledgments ; and requested to know when I might be honoured with another audience : he replied, to-morrow was his levy day, and he would be glad of my attendance ; concluding with assuring me of his best services. Saying this, he retired, and left me in an inundation of joys on the gracious reception I met with ; and as the porter appeared rather more civil than usual, on his opening the door, I slipped him another shilling, and strutted into the street with an air of consequence, congratulating myself on my approaching affluence.

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The next business which claimed my attention, was to provide a convenient lodging. Accordingly, I traversed all the neighbouring streets, as I was determined to be as near my Lord as possible, and at length, observing a bill up at a genteel house in Parliament, descriptive of Apartments for single Gentlemen, I rapped at the door, and desired to see the room, which the willing landlady readily complied with. I expressed my approbation, and desired to know the price, although I believe my readers will give me credit for saying, that her demand, however exorbitant, was but a secondary consideration in the then state of my expectations: “why, sir,” replied the good dame, eyeing my pulse, which I had in my hand, in readiness to secure apartments so contiguous to my Lord, “one guinea and a half per week, is the lowest I can take; and that is exceeding cheap in Parliament-street, where gentlemen offer any money, on account of the convenience to the houses of parliament and the minister’s levees,——” Here I interrupted the good lady, who seemed inclined to continue her encomium on the situation till midnight, by assuring her I was perfectly satisfied; and having paid her a week’s advance,

told

told her I should sleep there that evening, and would send my trunks immediately. So saying, I returned to the inn, where, for the expence of a shilling, I had my moveables conveyed to my lodgings.

On my return home, (now concluding I had one) I found my landlady's son, and a lodger, in the back parlour, on the point of going to the play. I resolved at once, if agreeable, to accompany them thither : they received my offer with pleasure ; and after drinking a comfortable dish of tea, we set out to the theatre, where the tragedy of *Isabella* was to be performed : the house was every where crouded : for my part, the brilliancy of the lamps, the music, &c. took up my attention solely, having never been in London before. And, as a description of that kind of theatre to which I was accustomed to resort in the country, may not be unenterprising to my readers, I shall here draw a picturesque view of the best theatre in our neighbourhood : — Farmer *Freehold's* barn always supplies the place of a théâtre ; in which are raised a few boards, collected from the ruins of some decaying mansion, on a few barrels, bricks, &c. to answer the purposes of a stage : the scenes are composed

posed of pièces of old painted papers, collected from old buildings, and pasted upon wooden frames, with the addition of a few old paper pictures—the dresses consist of left-off cloaths, once the companions of some venerable rustic sages, as you will believe when I inform you, that one of the cuffs may afford cloth sufficient to make a modern maccaroni a garment to cover the principal part of his body; and the waistcoat flaps in proportion; these metamorphosed with some red leather, lacquered with different colours; their faces covered with a variety of frightful masks; their band, two blind fiddlers, and a fifer; the seats for the accommodation of the audience, composed of old chairs, stools, &c. &c. the pieces which they perform, have names of their own creation; sometimes spelling the title of a good play backwards, as they do their names also;—for instance, for *Isabella*, they say *Allebasi*; for *Who's the Dupe*, say *S'obtw eht Epud*, and so on, and almost as perfectly transposing every act and scene of their performance. The reader, I hope, will pardon this introduction of a description of a country theatre; the contrast will plead some excuse for my astonishment, at this time, when the curtain drew up, and the play began.

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At the close of the third act, my feelings were roused at a young lady's fainting, through the intolerable heat of the house. I immediately supported her in my arms, and by the aid of another lady who sat next to her, she soon recovered. In my whole life I never saw so sweet a human form ; in short, nature had lavished all her beauties here, unattended by art : she made me many acknowledgments for my civility, and so forth, and I do declare I thought myself highly favoured, and returned the best compliments in my power ; so in short, we were very agreeable company for the remainder of the evening, and were very highly entertained.

The curtain being dropped for the last time that night, I solicited the honour of attending her, urging the danger a young lady was subject to, at that time of the evening : after a few refusals, she consented, concluding with her fear that she should take me out of my way. I conducted her to Salisbury-street, whereupon, knocking at the door, I was admitted into a genteel apartment, where an elderly lady was seated at supper. " Ma'am," cried the sweet girl, " this is a gentleman to whom I am much obliged for his care
of

of me at the theatre." "*Matilda*," answers the matron, I am very much beholden to him. Do sir," continued she, turning to me, "oblige me by your company to sup with us. *Matilda*, do you ask the gentleman." Madam, (returned I) you overwhelm me much with this good behaviour; such civility to a stranger in this city, is very rare. After supper, the topic of our conversation was the diversion of the evening, in which *Matilda* displayed so much wit and sound judgment, as both surprised and instructed me. "Mrs. Siddons, Mamma," said she, "in the character of Isabella, is beyond every thing I ever saw; the different passions are so finely portrayed by her, that there was scarce a dry eye in the house.—Apropos, sir," turning to me, "are you not of my opinion?" Sincerely, Miss, (replied I) no person can condemn your excellent judgment. "Oh, you flatter," returned she. No, upon my honour, (returned I) I am not yet thoroughly initiated in that vice.—In short, after spending two hours very agreeably, I returned home, wholly taken up with the image of the charming *Matilda*.

C H A P. VI.

GO TO MY LORD'S LEVEE—MEET CAPTAIN BLUSTER THERE—HIS STORY.

IN the morning I arose about ten, and having gone through the hands of a friseur, at twelve o'clock I arrived at my Lord's; there I found a numerous assembly of people, and among them my former intimate Captain *Bluster*, I instantly went up to him, and after salutations were past, he informed me he was come to solicit my Lord's interest for a new regiment, his old one being broke; observing that my Lord had promised to prefer him in a week. "I suppose, Mr. *Lounge*, you are upon preferment too." Yes, (said I) I am. "Aye," said he, "if my Lord promised—." Here he was interrupted by my Lord's coming up to us and enquiring politely how we did; again promising to serve us in a very short time, two or three days at most.—What think ye of my Lord, Captain, (said I. "What do I think," replied *Bluster*, "why that he'll make men of us."—I was still at a loss for a knowledge why so many attended his levee: in this matter, *Bluster* kindly

kindly relieved me, by telling me they were dependants upon my Lord's county. "Heavens," exclaimed I, "he is indeed a benevolent man, and blefs my ftars a thoufand times in directing me to a perfon, whose breaft retained fo much humanity. The levee being over, *Blufter* propofed going to the Tilt-yard Coffee-Houfe, for he had fomething to impart to me; to which propofal I acquiefced—being arrived there and calling for a bottle and toast, he began as follows.—" *Mr. Lounge*, from the time I had the pleafure of your company in the ftage coach, and fitting an evening together, I conceived a friendship for you, which I fhould be happy to cultivate, if it is agreeable on your fide."—I replied it was perfectly fo; for as I was a ft ranger to London and its methods, I fhould be happy to form an acquaintance with one fo well fchooled in it: faying this, we fhook hands.—" Now," fays he, " I am determined to make you laugh, though at my expence, by relating an adventure, in which I was engaged the evening before I had the pleafure of your acquaintance;—as likewise the head of my origin."—I fignifying my affent, he began his hiftory as appears in the following chapter.

HISTORY OF CAPTAIN BLWSTER.

“MY father was a physician of some note in Scotland, and resided at Edinburgh; as I was the only child, as the saying is, I was spoiled: however when I had attained the age of ten years, I was sent to a boarding school, about thirty miles from my father’s estate. I had only been there a very few weeks, before I felt the difference of my treatment.—Dr. Tawg’s (that was the pedant’s name,) sole delight was reigning over the children’s posteriors: on my numerous complaints of his treatment to my father, I was at length released from it and taken home, where I remained two years, at the conclusion of which, I was placed under another master; here I was immured four years, practising and inventing every kind of mischief that could be thought of, for my diversion; numberless were the complaints made to my father of my wicked disposition—but without effect;—I underwent the severest correction, to make up for my father’s non attention;—however I was ordered home, and glad enough of it I was;—but the change of my situation did not long please me,

me, as my father hinted his intention of my following his profession, which was a stay-maker and man-milliner;—this did not at all suit my inclination;—I was fond of a gay life, dress, &c. and associating with a number of young fellows, who met every week at a room in order to spout a variety of speeches out of plays. In this society I was counted a good orator;—indeed I could tear a passion to tatters as well as the best of them. This society, which we entitled *Thespians*, was in general frequented by female members as well as male, and it was here I first became acquainted with a beautiful young lady, whose name was *Maria*; in short I was entirely devoted to her charms—and the characters I played to her compleated the conquest,—I loved her but too well! If I played Romeo, she was my Juliet:—Oh! had she been as virtuous as she was lovely, her fame would have been univalled.

“ I made my addreses to this adorable and beautiful young creature, and had the satisfaction to find they were well received; and at length, imagining I had inspired her with a mutual affection, I proposed an elopement;—to this, without the least hesitation, she agreed, and the night fol-

lowing, at about twelve o'clock, was fixed on for the hour of our departure ; in short after having made free with my father's cash, we set out, and in a very small time arrived at Birmingham (all the way passing for man and wife, for I soon found my *cara sposa* to be no virgin) where we enlisted ourselves in a troop of itinerant players ; I hadn't been a member of this worthy community many days, ere the seed of jealousy began to root in my breast, at the attention one of the young comedians paid to *Maria* : and, tho' she did not openly return it, I was not without my suspicions, which I quickly found were well founded ; for on my return to my lodgings one evening, just after our performance was over, I found my *very* virtuous beautiful *Maria* had eloped with the son of the Buskin—after making free with all the cash I possessed ;—no words can express my rage at this discovery ;—I instantly resolved to pursue them and be revenged,—but upon a cool reflection, I determined to return to my father's and implore him to forgive me for my folly.—I accordingly put my plan in execution, and had the happiness of succeeding ; but my father, fearful lest I should ever again be
tempted

tempted to renew my intimacy with the Thespians, purchased me the commission I now bear :” Here *Bluster* ended his narrative, and our bottle being emptied, we parted, I to my affairs, and he to his.

C H A P. VII.

MEET BLUSTER AT THE COFFEE HOUSE—RELATE
A COMICAL ADVENTURE—CHARACTERS OF JACK
QUIDMIRE—F. FRIBBLE—AND DENNIS O'DUNDER

THE next day having according to appointment met *Bluster* at the coffee house, he, agreeable to his promise, related his evening's adventure, which was as follows :—

“ One evening last week, being out late, and some miles from home, I resolved to take up a lodging in the first peasant's house that seemed willing to receive me ; while walking alone, and fit for mischief, I was considering within myself where I could be best accommodated,—then ruminating on the ill consequence of mixing with strangers,—I was of two minds, whether it would be most proper I should pursue my journey, or stop to rest myself ; with these ambiguous thoughts, I came to a genteel looking house :—Just as I gained the door, it opened, and a decent looking female

female came running out, who seemed to be a servant, and on the hunt for some expected person :—Impressed with this natural supposition, I approached her. “Is your name *Aimwell*,” cried she, in rather an impatient manner? I answered in the affirmative, perceiving by her question, there was something to be dived into, and you know, that I am never backward to get at any business of this kind, for I soon discovered that there was an elopement going forward, and learned what Ma’am was about. “And is the coach ready?” continued she. ‘The coach! Yes, yes, my dear, I’ll get a coach in a minute, there is a stand near us.’ “Oh! do so, make haste, mistress & her maiden aunt, are now in bed and asleep: *Louisa* has her bundle ready, and prepared for elopement—you cannot have a better opportunity, she poor thing will break her heart, if disappointed.”—‘Nay, by heavens!’ said I, ‘she shall not be disappointed, I will run and provide a coach, and do you bid my dear *Louisa* come down stairs and be in readiness to go with me.’

“We parted now, and I ran for a coach, wondering, within myself, how this strange business would terminate. Happily I got
one,

one, and in a few minutes, a lady all muffled up appeared ; and fearful that she should see me, and find her mistake, I lifted her up with all a lover's haste, and put her in the coach, whispering the man to drive to my lodgings :—I was now apprehensive of speaking, for fear my dear *Louisa* should distinguish my voice from her lover's, but to my no little surprize, I found the deception continued, and my new Dulcinea was enquiring whither we were going, and when we were to be married ; which question I evaded with uncommon sagacity. Though I had no doubt of my dear, sweet, and charming *Louisa* bringing a handsome fortune, as it was apparent, that an appointment was made, and *Mr. Aimwell* was to have ran away with her, yet, I confess, I was wishing for a candle—all lovers have not the same eyes : What *Mr. Aimwell* might think an angel, I might fancy a devil :—However, let her be ever so ugly,—the whimsical adventure, thought I, will make an ample compensation.

“ Having now arrived at my lodging—we alighted, and I escorted my muffled lady up to a private apartment.

“ When

“ When she was seated, I was between two minds, whether or not to examine my prize before I made use of it. I resolved, however, upon hap hazard, to get a candle, as I was conscious her surprize, upon the discovery would little avail :— ‘ Stay, my dear,’ cried I, ‘ I’ll go and get a light.’ “ No, dear Mr. *Aimwell*,” returned she, “ I’m in such a figure—.” ‘ Oh ! but we shant’t know what we are about,’ said I. “ Yes, yes,” retorted she, “ Where is the Parson ? I’m sure he has the ceremony by heart. Indeed I should die with shame upon such an occasion. Pray, Mr. *Aimwell*———.”

“ Regardless of what she said, I soon procured a light, and returning, ‘ Now, my angel,’ said I, ‘ indulge me with a sight of your lovely face, and complete the conquest you have already made.’ After some hesitation she complied,—but ! good reader ! figure to yourself my astonishment at the sight of a wrinkled female, old enough to have been my grandmother !—I stood for some moments petrified by surprize, which she perceiving, prayed me to forgive her. “ She had a regard for her niece,” she said, “ and knowing she was about to elope, took the advantage

tage of the night, being so dark, imposed upon the servant; and to prevent *Louisa's* being ruined by me, determined to take all the danger upon herself."

"Though chagrined, as I was, at the imposition--yet the revenge pleased me.

"Looking at her with a sneering smile, 'I am sorry, Madam,' cried I, 'you have not played your cards better, I am not *Mr. Amnell*.'

"No! Where is he?"—"Why," returned I, with a hearty laugh,—"I suppose, as you have given him an excellent opportunity, he has now your niece in his arms.

"When the word *arms* was uttered, she turned pale, and began to storm and dance about like a bedlamite, at being thus cheated, and departed in a rage.

"Now tell me, *Loungé*, don't you think it an odd adventure?"—"Undoubtly," returned I, "The biter was bit on both sides.—Egad, if the niece han't planned her schemes with more caution than the aunt, they're a sapient pair———."

Here

Here our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a tall effeminate figure, humming aloud, the following ditty :

FREE from confinement and strife,
 I'll plow thro' the ocean of Life,]
 To seek new delights,
 Where beauty invites,
 But ne'er be confin'd to a wife ;
 The man that is free,
 Like a vessel at sea,
 After conquest and plunder may roam :
 But when either confin'd
 By wife or by wind,
 Tho' for glory design'd,
 No advantage they find,
 But steer from the harbour at home :

He walked about the room, for some time, in a very fantastical manner, when all of a sudden, turning round short, and spying *Bluster* (who knew him) he approached us, saying, " I am very glad to see thee, *Tom* ! Fly blow me ! But prithe, why do we not see you at *BROOKES's* ? We are quite bored without the essence of
 your

your wit, d—n me!" Saying thus, he turned to the glass, in a minuet step, tuning some air, that we did not directly understand; which I learned afterwards, to be the following .

FLY, fly to yon vale, other pastimes pursue,
May your eyes and tongue have determin'd thy fate,
This face and this shape are not destin'd for you,
And former disdain is now turned into hate.

After viewing himself for some time, he exclaimed,—“God’s curse! This is worse than WHITE’s, for there, upon tiptoe, one can see the tip of one’s nose, but by all that’s elegant! here one cannot see the tip of one’s hat, though mine is really reckoned the largest that ever was yet made——.”

“Oh! upon my conscience,” echoes an Hibernian gentleman, who sat in a box by the fire, “Billy, my honey, by the Lord Harry, you’re always at the glass,—and indeed a figure like your’s wont bear much examination; for you look like one of the wax figures in Fleet-street

honey." "Your comparisons were, and ever will be odious, Sir *Dennis*; but I can only entertain contempt for them."—"The ladies!" returned the other. "Oh gentlemen, view the ladies' man." Here Sir *Dennis* turned *Billy* about, to the no small entertainment of the whole company; and tunes the following stanza from Mr. *Edwin's* favourite Collection:—

"A clerk I was in London gay,

"*Billy* linkum feedle;

"And went in boots to see the play,

"Merry fiddlem tweedle:

"I march'd the lobby, twill'd my stick,

"Diddle, daddle, deedle;

"The girls all cry'd, he's quite the kick!

"*Billy*, linkum feedle."

"A pretty play thing for the ladies," continues Sir *Dennis*: "Devil burn me, if I don't believe he has got stays on—oh, you are a fine stick of wood."

"You horrid savage, let me go," cries *Billy*, "or by——." "What is the puppet going to draw?" Here *Billy* drew, and was retreating backwards, when a waiter entering with some fried chops,

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ran

ran against the strutting fop, and discharged the greasy contents of the plate upon his fine cloaths! This accident compleated the scene—*Billy* fainted—*Sir Dennis* laughed—and all the company tittered. “Oh, he is a man for the ladies—he his the tippee O!” said *Sir Dennis*.

After some time *Billy* recovered. “Well pigeon heart,” says *Sir Dennis* again?—“Waiter,” cried *Billy*, without heeding what he said, “if you will run and get me a chair, I will forgive the mischief you have done.” The waiter ran, and in a few minutes returned, when the fop said, “Well now I shall leave this horrid den, for if ever I was in company with such a set of savages, evaporate me!” So saying, he hurried out of the room, leaving *Sir Dennis*, *Bluster*, and myself almost convulsed with laughter.

CHAP. VIII.

RECEIVE TWO LETTERS,—ONE FROM DISMAL, AND
ANOTHER FROM A COMPANION, WHO IS GONE
TO BATH,—MEET AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

IN the evening when I returned home, I found two letters on my table, one of which I knew came from my friend *Dismal*, wherein I found enclosed the amount of the sale of my goods, (the sum total of which was 3l. 11s. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.) This was to me a seasonable relief; for though my Lord kept on promising, yet I found he had done nothing for me yet, and my cash was reduced to two guineas. *Dismal* informed me of some particulars worthy remark: one in particular was, that I had an uncle, who, about twenty years ago, went to the West Indies; but whether he was living or dead, he could not tell; however he encouraged me to hope all things would turn out to my advantage. The good man's sympathy and friendship filled me with gratitude—and feeling myself very comfortable, sat down

to read the contents of the other letter, which on opening, I found to be a pretty long one, and contained the following scene, which my friend saw at an inn on his road to Bath. —

“ DEAR LOUNGE,

“ You remember I have some time ago, wrote you an account of my safe arrival in these parts ; and had scarce leisure so to do when I addressed you ; therefore could not furnish you with any thing worthy notice.

“ I have now to acquaint you, that the waters have much benefited me, and have almost rid me of my indisposition.——I must now therefore divert you by relating what happened one night at an inn, on the road hither :

“ You must know then, that on our journey, at the inn where we took up our residence for the night, I was placed in a chamber the next to a *young* lady's, as I at first conceived, which only a thin wainscot parted ; so that I could have easily thrust myself through : however I reconciled myself by embracing the opportunity I had to indulge my curiosity, in observing all
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the ceremony of *undressing* ; when I had more experience, perhaps, than many of double our ages. I saw her pray, undress, and go to bed. And if you had been a spectator, you must have been filled with surprise, on observing the preliminaries and the operations, which took place, to reduce a fine engaging woman, in appearance, to *her very self*, previous to her committing her *remains* to the inclosure of the curtains. She commenced disrobing, and proceeded gradually too withal, *a capite ad calcem*, from top to toe : first, off went her head-dress, and I soon spied out that she had red hair, though women usually so powder, that they often blind our eyes ; and a man may be married a considerable while before he discovers what colour his wife's hair is of, if she always takes care to dress or undress out of her husband's sight. Then out came three or four artificial teeth, which she carefully put into her little box, but first rubbed them with her handkerchief. After that she plucked off her mantua, unloosed her stays, and then from her arm-pits brought out two *sweet* bags, and from each hip, a *plumper*, to make her ladyship look with jolly sides, which will bear a good thrumming on occasion. Then rub-

bed her breast with a fine white cloth, and looking into the glass, smiled to herself, which was as much as to say, O how do these bewitch men, and drive them almost to a madness ! So after all those troublesome appurtenances, petticoats, red shoes, silk stockings, &c. which half made up the essence of a woman, were well off, she slipped her morning gown over her smock, kneeled by the bed-side, and implored of God Almighty, I suppose, to send her a good night's rest, and a pleasant dream of marriage. I being myself, stinted my curiosity, and intruded no farther on the secrecy.

“ Thus far indeed my fancy led me to do, and have learned experience from it ; but I was unwilling to press upon modesty, or disturb my repose, by beholding perhaps those beauties which would create me a disgust in ruminating upon.

“ Thus, dear *Bob*, in a moment we learn more than in twenty years. 'Tis true I sleep pretty heartily ; but whenever I waked, I could not but reflect on what I had seen, and considered on the deceitfulness of that sex, who daily by their wiles and subtle artifices, are too hard for
us,

us, though we lay claim to three parts of the sense and reason in Christendom.

“ I protest, as matters are, were it so decent, a man should examine a woman before he marries her, as a butcher does an ox or a sheep, or horse-market man, a pad at *Smithfield*, that he may the better be satisfied that they are sound both *wind* and *limb*, and *look in the mouth*, to see how the *teeth* are fixed, natural or artificial, to have the less occasion of complaining afterwards. And though 'tis probable that we may, and some men daily do meet with women that make very good wives, yet, would modesty allow it, this custom were not amiss; and in some countries, there is more than ordinary care about marriages, and there is all inspection made into the state of the woman's body, as well as her mind, that the male party is to marry. And this indeed a great piece of prudence. But I am apt to believe, *Bob*, that foreign women are not altogether so used to the many fallacies our English experience, and should every one act as the woman I have been speaking of does, 'twould almost make me loath the whole sex; and you know, 'tis not every little matter that can draw me from
the

the love of a woman. You may thank God, that you are likely to have a most virtuous, young, and beautiful wife.—When I shall make an attempt towards one, I cannot tell ; that such blessings are scarce, the world sufficiently knows ; and the longer a man is waiting for a good wife, the better in all probability, he will meet with at last.

“ I am, dear Sir,

“ Yours,

“ —————.”

Enlivened by the cheering encouragement I had received from *Dismal's* letter, and entertained by the novelty of the other, I perambulated into the Park.—The evening was pleasant, the place very full of company.

In one of my walks, who should I meet but an old playmate of mine in my infancy : his father left him a pretty fortune, and very well to do ; yet there was a cloud upon his brow, as if his mind was labouring under some discontent.

“ Prithee, *George*,” said I accosting him, “ what the plague can make you look so sad ?”

“ Oh

“Oh *Bob*,” said he, “I do indeed look sad, but not without a cause. You know I was placed apprentice in Cheapside; and being out of my time, and my father dead, I began business with a pretty capital, as I had a turn naturally gay and expensive, it may easily be supposed, upon getting a large sum of money into my hands, I gave loose to every impulse of inclination; and my principal ambition being to be thought a fine gentleman, I lost no opportunity of making myself worthy so distinguished a character. I subscribed to every concert, hired a country house, and in short took every step to reach the summit of subaltern politeness. I succeeded so far in my endeavours, as to be taken notice of by all the young ladies in the neighbourhood, and I had an actual offer from the deputy of a certain waid, of four thousand pounds in hand, with his daughter, exclusive of what I should be entitled to at his decease. This proposal, I must confess, was agreeable enough; for I was gay: no man ever paid a stricter attention to business; and I was far from disliking the girl, or her fortune. But unhappily, I had an ambition to be married to a woman of family, and Mr. Deputy not being entitled to

write the three pretty letters E. S. Q. after his namé, I declined the proposal, with professions of the highest respect, and saw my intended spouse in a fortnight after married to a worshipful tallow chandler, not quite an hundred miles from Aldgate. Chance, however, good naturedly effected what I was some time bringing about :—happening to sup one night at a grocer's house, a neighbour, I became acquainted with one of the most amiable ladies I ever saw in my life ; my eyes were riveted on her the whole evening, nor could possibly think of any thing else but that agreeable idea after the company broke up. After a sleepless night, I arose, heaved a sigh, scrawl'd over a love letter, read it half a dozen times, and then threw it in the fire, undetermined what method to pursue in regard to the new emotions I found in my heart. I hadn't been down stairs above half an hour, when who should I see but the identical charmer stepping into my shop, with a seeming timidity, to order home a piece of fine muslin. Not to be too prolix, I made use of that opportunity to obtain an appointment. One interview produced another, a second brought on a third, and so on, till at last I was blessed with a confession of reciprocal esteem, and
declared

declared to be the object of her choice.—Elated with joy, I waited on her father, Sir *Simon Epping*. He had been a cheese-monger, who had served the office of Sheriff, and received the honor of Knighthood when he presented the City address: he had many children, so he could spare me no more than twelve hundred pounds with his daughter. But I was too romantically in love, to value fortune; so I made myself perfectly happy in the possession of the woman I loved.”

“What, is she dead then?” interrupted I.

“Heaven forbid,” returned he: “no, it is her extravagance that makes me sad.”
“But then,” said I, “you can very well afford it——”

Here we were interrupted by two ladies who accosted us, one elegantly dressed, accompanied by the lady I had met at the play—the charming *Matilda*—the former I understood to be the wife of my friend: compliments passed. “Mamma has often enquired after you,” says the charming girl, smiling with ineffable sweetness. “Forgive my want of politeness,” returned

turned I, "business——" "Well, no excuses—let us have your company again when convenient. I'll assure you, Sir, not to flatter, Mamma has a very great esteem for you," "I'm but too happy in gaining the esteem of people I honour so much." "Quite a courtier!" returned *Mamma*. "Apropos, Mrs. *Trueby*," continued she, turning to my friend's wife, "have you a card to invite Mr. *Lounge*, to Lady *Diaper*'s rout to-morrow evening?" "Yes, my dear," replied Mrs. *Trueby*. "Then so," presenting me with a card, "your company will be an additional pleasure to our party, at least, I think I can answer for one," added she, looking at *Maria* archly, who blushed, and stammered out, "Lord! Mrs. *Trueby*." After some time spent in an agreeable conversation, we left the Park, and I returned home, after having promised to wait on the charming *Melinda* the ensuing evening.

C H A P. IX.

ATTEND THE LEVEE—AM ELATED WITH JOY—
AN EVENING ROUT—HUMOURS OF A CARD
TABLE.

AFTER having passed a night filled with the pleasing image of the lovely *Matilda*, I attended the levee as usual ; my Lord, that day, running up to me, congratulated me on my approaching appointment ; “ for,” says he, “ the ensuing week a vacancy will take place in the Secretary of State’s Office, which will enable me to fix you in an eligible situation :” elated as I was with joy at the news, I failed not expressing my thanks to his Lordship for his goodness : “ now,” says I to myself, “ I can with pleasure, address the charming *Matilda* on the theme of love ; before I could not.” My raptures so got the better of me, that I did not recollect, for some time, where I was ; “ Heyday” says *Bluster*, tapping me on the shoulder, “ what in the name of
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fortune makes you so merry ?—“Ah, *Bluffer*,” said I, “congratulate me, I am *PROMISED a PLACE* next week :”—“I give you joy of your *promise*,” returned he. I immediately acquainted him with my recontre with *Marilda*, concluding with inviting him to share of the mirth of the ensuing evening.

Having dined together, we parted to dress for the rout—he promising to meet me at Lady *Diaper*’s, with whom he was well acquainted,—as in short, he was with most people of fashion.

After having gone through the hands of an able friseur, and three hours spent in the different departments of dress—I proceeded in a coach to Salisbury-street, the coachman having announced my arrival, by a loud rat-tat at the door—which no sooner opened, then I tript nimbly in the parlour, where my chamber was seated with her mama and Mrs. *Trueby*, who, I found was related to Mrs *D*——; compliments flew about now like wind—“there ma’am, there’s the gay agreeable,” said Mrs *Trueby*, “why, Su, we thought we should never had the honour of another

ther visit," exclaimed Mrs. D——; "the honour should have been mine," replied I. "Why madam, he and my helpmate are old acquaintances, infant play-fellows." "Indeed?" "Yes," answered Mrs. *Trueby*, "but that was in the days of innocence." Replies Miss, "why you make them as old as Druid's cousin,—“ But Mr. *Lounge* I hope you are not offended at my cousin's raillery:”—“ Oh, not in the least, it is perfectly agreeable;—“ Oh, you good-natured creature,” returns Mrs. *Trueby*, “too good for the age we live in,—you should have flourished in the days of good Queen Bess;—“ A truce! a truce! I beseech ye cousin,” cries *Matilda*; “Ah, Lucy is a madcap still,” replied Mrs. D——, “but come, Sir, our tea by this time is ready, so without ceremony we'll walk up stairs.—Mrs. D—— and Mrs. *Trueby* walked up, and I lead *Matilda*;—“ You seem thoughtful, Madam,” said I, tenderly, pressing her hand to my lips, which she did not attempt to withdraw.—“ No, not at all, Mr. *Lounge*,” replied she, endeavouring to recover herself!—“ Oh! *Matilda* could I be but favoured with your regard.” “ You already possess that Sir: think not that I can be ungrateful

for the attention you paid me:" "Ah, how happy you make me by this confession."

"then use it with discretion," added she, patting me twice with her fan; I again pressed her hand, and we walked up stairs; "Oh, here they come," echoes Mrs. *Trueby*, "pray you couple of devils what have ye been amusing yourselves with, looking at the pictures, or taking too great a notice of originals, eh?" looking slyly at *Matilda*. "Pshaw! cousin, you are always plaguing me," answers my lovely girl. "Ah, I wish I could once persuade her to be serious," returns Mrs. *D* —. "Pray, Madam," said I, addressing myself to Mrs. *Trueby*, "where is my friend, I thought I should see him here?" "Your friend, Sir, Oh! I shall be troubled with his odious exhortations soon enough; but, apropos, you may well call him your friend, for he has been extremely lavish in your praise," replies Mrs. *Trueby*. "Indeed! he has given an excellent description of your many good qualities, and I am very happy in the acquaintance of so worthy a young man," replied Mrs. *D* —. *Matilda's* eyes seemed to sparkle approbation at what her mother said. "Madam," said I, "you honour me too much, but
he

be assured, that whatever may be my failings, gratitude or honour never shall be wanting to retaliate your frankness and civility.

By this it was to time to set off for Lady *Diaper's*; and a coach being called, we soon arrived at Lombard-street; going up stairs, Mrs. *Trueby* said, "now we shall see a specimen of city fashions:" we entered the room, which was full of company, among whom I perceived Captain *Bluster* in conversation with a whole circle of ladies.—Nothing happened worthy of remark, excepting my obtaining a promise of mutual affection: this at once completed my happiness, and which made me excellent company the whole evening.

I now began to reconnoitre the company:

Mrs. *Trueby* having joined some company, her husband, Mrs. *D—*, my charmer, and myself promenaded the room; as we passed one table, we observed a grotesque groupe at cards; the first, who I understood was Mrs. *Bodkin*, widow of the late *Samuel Bodkin*, Esq., citizen and

taylor; she appeared to be upwards of threescore, and the yellowness of her flesh was rendered more striking by her dress, her polonese was made tight to her shape, of a brilliant orange colour, it was flounced, festooned with crape and ribbon, her petticoat was a silver tulle, and she had silver guaze cuffs 'vandyked to the top of her shoulders, a white ribbon encircled her scraggy neck, while buffont attempted to cover her bosom as flat as a deal board, her withered arms were decorated with pearl bracelets, fastened with diamonds, and her fingers loaded with rings :—such was the figure now planted before us; having been I found mortified by a run of bad cards, she was going to try her luck by renouncing, though she held two good diamonds in the suit, in question, in her hand; she accordingly gave a significant ogle a-cross the table to her partner, a handsome young fellow, and finely contrasted to herself; he did not, however, seem to comprehend her ocular information; upon this her antagonist, Mrs. *Dumplin*, a baker's wife, about 20 years younger, and very corpulent with a fiery complexion, and a scarlet feather nodding over her forehead, exclaimed, in a hoarse key,

“ What

"What do you mean by that, madam, to my knowledge, you are able to follow, I can tell every card in the pack."

"Really, madam," replied the widow, "this is very extraordinary, for if you have not actually looked over my hand, or have had dealings with the devil, you could not tell what is there." "Neither one or the other madam," answered the other, I scorn your insinuations, "I have had no dealings with your friend, the gentleman in black, but I happen to have a good memory madam, I am not superannuated, I can inform you of every card that is out, and consequently must know what is in your hand; I can, therefore, be positive that you have diamonds in your hand, aye, more than one." "As to your being positive in regard to what is in my hand," said her antagonist, "is a monstrous piece of impertinence, and what you have nothing to do with, madam."

"No, madam," replied the choleric lady, "have I not to do with my game? Am I not to win it if I have cards? Are you to cheat me out of it?" "Cheat! I cheat!" echoes the other, "really, madam, I don't understand ye; you take great liberties with me, and I will not put up with

with them I assure ye :—Cheat you ! surely I have not lived so long in the world to have such an insult offered me.” “Why really,” returned the other, “you have lived long enough to know better.” “My time of life,” retorted my pretty wrinkled dame, I old ! Heaven grant me patience ! I would have you to know, ma’am, —but, there’s your tricks, much good may they do you ; and I have done with you.” Here the poor lady vociferating with too much violence, unfortunately discharged three of her false teeth, and they dropped upon the table ; and as they appeared suitable ornaments to the three tricks, they produced such a roar of laughter, to the full enjoyment of which we loudly contributed. Soon after which, having seen enough of the city rout, we returned home, well satisfied with our evening’s diversion.

C H A P. X.

AN UNEXPECTED ACCIDENT—MY DISTRESS ON
THE OCCASION—CONFUSION AT MY LORD'S BE-
HAVIOUR—BLUSTER'S ADVICE.

FOR the space of a fortnight, no mortal enjoyed more felicity ; continually cheered by my Lord's numerous promises, and my *Matilda's* assurances of constancy.

One morning after my dancing attendance on my Lord—I, as usual, hastened to see the idol of my wishes—when, what was my surprize at beholding the house shut up ; “ heav’ns !” cried I, “ what extraordinary affair has brought this about ?—But yesterday I was the happiest of men ! But now, alas ! Who so miserable ?” Seeing a woman standing at a doot, near the house, I enquired of her whither *Mrs. D——* was gone ; she replied, “ she knew nothing more of the matter, than that they had set off in a post chaise early that morning, but whither they

they were gone, she could not tell." I thanked her for the intelligence, and hastened to *Trueby's*, who was as much surprized as I was. "Alas," cried I, "then she is gone for ever!—Happiness will be a stranger to my bosom till I find my *Matilda*." "Time," replied Mr. *Trueby*, "will bring that about—have patience.—" "Patience to a madman, to one who loves as I do; who but yesterday was happy, but now, alas! who so miserable?" "I blame you not, Mr. *Lounge* for your concern, for indeed my cousin merit all your affection," said Mrs. *Trueby*. But here we were interrupted by a footman out of breath, who delivering us a letter, vanished in an instant: by the superscription, I knew it to be the hand of *Matilda*. Mrs. *Trueby* looking at the seal, which was black—trembled, and let it fall. Mr. *Trueby* then taking it up, opened it, and out dropped a picture of my dear girl; I instantly snatched it and pressed it to my lips, while Mr. *Trueby* opening the letter, reads as follows:—

"DEAR COUSIN,

"**Y**OU may, perhaps, be surprized, my dear Lady, at the news I am about to acquaint you with : I am now on my journey to Barbadoes :—You may remember my Mama has a brother who settled there ; he being at the point of death, and he having no other relation, except her, sent for us, with attendants to conduct us thither. I have only time to send this, together with my picture, which I beg you will deliver to Mr. *Lovage* : and tell him to make himself easy, with the hope of seeing me soon.

I AM

YOUR'S SINCERELY,

M A T I L D A D——."

This, I confess, gave me some comfort ; and I resolved to make myself easy, relying upon my Lord's promise of my perishment : though I was at once determined to hunt to him, the confused state of
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my affairs ; for I now owed my taylor more than was in my power to pay him ; my landlady, to whom I was six months in arrears for rent, which she seemed pressing for. This, I must confess, staggered me ; I therefore, determined to urge my situation to him next morning. Accordingly I did ; and the *Noble Peer* no sooner understood I was in distress, but he turned upon his heel, and said, “ I had better remained in the country, for he should not be able to appoint any one there this six months.” No words can paint the distraction I laboured under at hearing this.

“ Your Lordship promised to appoint me last week.” “ Tis true,” replied he, “ I did, but I am disappointed.” “ Ah, my Lord, so am I too, and bitterly I assure ye.” Saying this, I walked to the other end of the room, where I was accosted by a person in black, whose shabby appearance denoted his poverty, and by what I could find, had subsisted upon his Lordship’s promises for a long time.

“ Sir,” said he, addressing himself to me, “ I perceive, by your chagrin, that my Lord has disappointed you, but believe me,

me, you are not the only one, he has deceived, I myself have lived upon hopes, expectances, and promises for these two years. my taylor will not give me credit for another suit of cloaths, and my landlord threatens to clap me in Newgate for my rent: the best friend that I have had is my uncle—you understand me; it is impossible for a Levee Haunter not to know my friendly relation in Long-Acre, who only takes thirty per cent to oblige ye' he is a very civil man I'll assure you, he has studied the graces, but unfortunately I have lost his friendship; my last shirt went yesterday, and he has as little faith as Jacob Solomon, though no levite—thus you see I am worse off than you."

Bluster's coming up to me the other went away. I immediately acquainted him with my distress,—he pitied me, but he had that moment received a similar rebuff, adding that his Lordship was a villain, and that we had both been deceived;—"But *Louange*," said he, "I am determined either to make my fortune, or be entirely a beggar, this very night!" and I will make a grand bet at B——'s, which will either

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strip

strip me, or line my pockets with gold ;— now I would advise you to muster up all you can, and try your luck.” I told him I would consider of it, and having promised to meet him in the evening at the above place, I returned home.

C H A P. XI.

MY REFLECTIONS—AT LENGTH AM DETERMINED
TO FOLLOW BLUSTER'S ADVICE—A STRANGE
TURN OF FORTUNE—MY RESOLUTION.

WHEN I came home, I threw myself upon a sofa, and gave way to the distress and anxiety I laboured under:—"Is there no true friendship existing,—is mankind still to be deceived by those hypocrites who under the mask of friendship, involve his fellow-creatures in ruin:—Oh! *Matilda*, my charming maid, how can I, wretched as I now am, aspire to the possession of one so superior to me—No! I must, though bitter the separation banish myself an exile to despairing love; but I am resolved to follow *Bluster's* advice, and if my fortune fail me, welcome misery!" Saying this, I pulled out my purse, and found it contained seven guineas and a half; with this sum, I was resolved to venture, and at the time appointed, met my friend, when we set out for B——s's, where there were a

number of people busied in throwing the dice. “Now,” says *Bluster*, “when you see me engaged, do you bet high, and leave the rest to fortune.

I walked some time about the room, observing the different tables; and now perceiving *Bluster* engaged, I sallied up to the table, he giving me the wink, I betted and soon found myself master of fifty guineas; encouraged by this, I betted higher, but found my stock considerably diminished;—not disheartened by this, I still proceeded on, and in less than an hour, had won 400 guineas; overjoyed at this turn of luck, having now more money than ever I before possessed, I resolved to leave off. *Bluster*, by this had made himself a considerable gainer; we therefore left the place, and parted for the evening.

On my return home, I called upon my landlady, and paid my rent, for which I received a thousand thanks, she concluding with delivering me a letter, upon opening it, I found it came from *Djmal*, and inclosed in another written by my long-lost *Uncle*.—“Heaven be praised,” said I, “I
now

now shall hear something of my relations." The contents of the epistle informed me of a great encrease to his wealth; and concluding with desiring me to come to him, with all possible expedition. No words can express my joy at the perusal of the letter; I resolved, however, to gall his Lordship, before I set off, in return for his duplicity.

C H A P. XII.

SET OFF FOR THE WEST-INDIES—RECEPTION AT
MY UNCLES—AN ADVENTURE.

THE next morning having equipped myself very smart, I attended his Lordship; he being me make so genteel appearance, was overwhelming me with his compliments and again numerous in his promises. "I am not again to be deceived by your Lordship," said I with a sneer, "your promises are like air-balloons full of nought but air!—No, my Lord! I came not to address you in that style, I came to thank ye for my appointment."—so saying, I turned upon my heel, and meeting *Bluster*, I told him my affair, he congratulated me, concluding with telling me he was cool. clear, and would if agreeable accompany me to the place of my destination; I replied it would be wholly so. Having spent a week in hiring a place in a vessel, equipping ourselves, &c.,

After

After having taken leave of my friend *Trueby*, we set sail in the *Nancy* packet, Capt. Wilson ; and after a pleasant voyage put into Barbadoes, where I was soon informed of my *Uncle's* habitation, at which place we soon arrived ; the old man welcomed us with a countenance expressing his joy at seeing me.—“ Ah, my dear *Bob*, thou canst not remember thy *Uncle*,—I set off on my voyage, before thou wert a twelvemonth old, but be that as it will, thou art the only relation I have in the world, and as such I will provide for thee ; to-morrow morning, my lawyer will be here, to whom I have given instructions ; to-day shall be spent in viewing part of the Island.” So saying, we set out, attended by several slaves, each of which were striving who should do me the most honour. Indeed I was enchanted at the variety of beautiful prospects with which this Island abounds ; several days were passed in different amusements—when one evening, it being remarkable serene and pleasant, I rambled out alone, on an excursion.

Having passed several plantations, came to an alley, where I espied the window

dow of a house open, and heard the sound of a guitar; filled with curiosity, I approached it, and saw a female figure, lovely in the extreme: the noise I made in coming alarmed the lady, who shrieked out, and lifting up her veil, discovered to my eyes, no other than my charming *Matilda*! Our joy at meeting, was inexpressible.—“Ah *Matilda*,” said I, “’tis now in my power to make proposals, which before I could not—I mean those of marriage.” Her Mama coming in “Heavens Mr. *Lounge*!” exclaimed she, “who would have thought of seeing you here?” “The meeting is rather extraordinary,” replied I, “but when I acquaint you with my story, you will no longer wonder at seeing me.” So saying, I related my story, in as brief terms as I could, and after staying some time, returned to my *Uncle’s*.

C H A P. XIII.

MY MARRIAGE WITH MATILDA, AND CONCLUSION.

ON my return to my *Uncle's* I acquainted him with the whole transaction ; at which he expressed his approbation, concluding with telling me he would himself immediately pay a visit to the old lady, and make an advantageous offer : I expressed my gratitude for his goodness to me, which he answered with " Pshaw, boy, never mind, thou shalt be happy." He being gone, I imparted my happiness to *Bluster*, who complimented me on it, saying ' by jove, you are a fortunate fellow.'—In the evening my *Uncle* returned, and entering the room, cried out, " there you young dog, I have done your business for you, and next Sunday's the day, tol lol."—Here he began singing. " A thousand thanks my dear sir,—but are you sure my *Matilda* is willing ?"—" Willing !" returns my *Uncle*, " Aye, faith is she, and ready too, or I'm much mistaken, but go yourself and be convinced."

I did

I did not stay to be bid twice, but immediately flew to Mrs. D---'s house, accompanied by *Bluster*, whom I introduced to them, and soon after received a confirmation of my *Uncle's* intelligence from the mouth of the charming *Matilda*. The time flew like lightening while I was there, but how tedious did the arrival of Sunday seem ; at length it came, and I was united to all my soul held dear.

The next morning we received the congratulations of the whole Island ;—and now reader it is time for me to put a period to my history, since by perseverance and honour, I have attained an ample fortune, and a beloved wife ;—Heaven has been pleased to bless us with two children, the image of their lovely Mother.—Humanity I exercise as far as is in my power to all—not forgetting to reward the good services of my old friend *Dismal* ; and I live, I am proud to say, honoured by the Natives, as a MAN of FEELING and BENEVOLENCE !

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